



CITY OF ABSECON
Municipal Complex
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Municipal Clerk

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CITY COUNCIL

APRIL 2, 2020

REGULAR MEETING - 5:00 PM

MINUTES

THIS WAS A ZOOM MEETING HELD ONLINE

The meeting was called to order by Council President, Keith Bennett at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

SIGNED IN: Butch Burroughs, Sandy Cain, Caleb Cavileer, Betty Howell, Steve Light, Frank Phillips, Fred Scerni, Ed Dennis and Auditors Mike Cesaro and Scott Barron, Chief Laughlin

PRESENT IN CONF. ROOM – Keith Bennett, Jessica Thompson, Carie Crone & Mayor Horton

STATEMENT OF THE SUNSHINE LAW

NOTIFICATION THAT THIS MEETING IS ELECTRONICALLY RECORDED

2020 RESOLUTIONS OUT OF CONSENT

52 Allowing the Budget to be read by title only.

Motion to read – Councilman Cavileer – second Councilwoman Howell

ROLL CALL: Butch Burroughs, yes; Sandy Cain, yes; Caleb Cavileer, yes; Betty Howell, yes; Steve Light, yes; Frank Phillips, yes; Keith Bennett, yes

PUBLIC HEARING – 2020 MUNICIPAL BUDGET

53 Adopting the 2020 Municipal Budget.

Motion to open to the public – Councilman Light – second – Councilwoman Cain
All were in favor.

Chris Seher – 707 Chelsea Road – at the last meeting, you were going to see if the taxes would be allowed to be deferred. Did you find anything out?

Jessica – she did and the state would have to approve it. It hasn't been announced yet.

Keith – he read off portions of the budget with a tax increase of 1.7 cents. This increase is due to Public Safety costs and in no part due to the new firehouse. We are using \$200,000 of the fund balance and leaving about 10% of our budget in it. He then read off some of the expenses and costs for the city.

Chris – he had given examples at last meeting where maybe money could possibly be used so there would be no tax increase. He is disappointed.

Keith – with the virus going on now, it's better to keep more in our surplus at this time. He feels the 1.7 cents is not that bad

Motion to close public – Councilman Phillips – second – Councilwoman Howell
All were in favor.

Motion to move Resolution #53 – Councilman Light – second – Councilwoman Cain
ROLL CALL: Butch Burroughs, yes; Sandy Cain, yes; Caleb Cavileer, yes; Betty Howell, yes; Steve Light, yes; Frank Phillips, no; Keith Bennett, yes

2020 RESOLUTIONS

- 54** Consenting to the appointment of Captain James R. Laughlin as Chief of the City of Absecon Police Department and authorizing the Mayor to sign an employment contract between the City of Absecon and James R. Laughlin for the same.
- 55** Re-Appointing Part-Time Special Law Enforcement Officers, Class II – namely Leigh Gadd.
- 56** Appointing Special Law Enforcement Officers, Class II – namely, Max Lorenzo, Matthew Wood and Lakieran Brown-White.

PUBLIC PORTION (for consent agenda items only)

Motion to open to the public – Councilman Burroughs – second – Councilwoman Howell

Chris Seher – he applauded them for adding an extra Class II officer and he congratulated the new Chief. He had the pleasure of working with him and feels he will be a good leader for the city. He thanked former Chief DeRitis for his service and wished him well in his retirement.

Keith – we will be doing a private swearing in for now and when we can all get together have another one and also recognizing John DeRitis for his service.

Motion to close public – Councilwoman Howell – second – Councilman Light
All were in favor.

CONSENT AGENDA

Resolutions 54 to 56 were read again.

Motion to move Consent Agenda – Councilman Light – second – Councilman Phillips

ROLL CALL: Burroughs, yes; Cain, yes; Cavileer, yes; Howell, yes; Light, yes; Phillips, yes; Bennett, yes

APPROVAL OF BILL LIST - \$463,073.05

Motion to approve – Councilman Light – second – Councilwoman Cain

ROLL CALL: Burroughs, yes; Cain, yes; Cavileer, yes; Howell, yes; Light, yes; Phillips, yes; Bennett, yes

REPORTS

Jessica – spring leaf pickup will begin next Monday through May 1st. The green day and shredding event for May 2nd will be cancelled and will be rescheduled. Census Day was April 1st and everyone should do it. NJ American Water is flushing the lines through May 31st in Absecon. Our website is always being updated with information. She thanked all the employees for their hard work and dedication during this time. Everyone is still working

Frank – he congratulated J.R. on becoming the Chief. He also announced that Frank Blee passed away yesterday and to keep the family in their prayers. He told everyone to be safe.

Steve – is there anything that anyone could do to help with the ambulance squad or police department at this time?

Chief Laughlin – first he thanked everyone for the opportunity to lead the department. In answer to Steve's question, we are on the front lines with all the public safety departments and hopes we can get through this tough time. You should both social and physical distance. The hardest thing is for all the first responders and health care workers and for all of us trying to stay safe.

Eddie Dennis, City Engineer– gave a brief update on the firehouse. The Governor's Executive Orders did allow construction to continue. Our contractor has expressed concerns that his schedule might be impacted by everything going on, but truthfully, no one knows what it might be. For now, everything is going on normally. It will appear that less is going on now, but it's not; the building is getting worked on now. Our other projects in the works for 2020 will still be moving on.

Steve – the site looks orderly and moving along nicely and it's a nice job. Are there any updates on our other projects?

Eddie – our road program contractor is working on Meadowview Avenue. They have a schedule to come in and pave in the middle of April for their and the parking lot at the fields. The sidewalks project will be done in the summer. If the school will stay closed, they might move it up.

Betty – had some calls from people on Shore Road going north and they're complaining about vibrations they feel since the gas company did some work.

Eddie – he can send a note to the gas company, but it's a state road.

Steve - the electric company has installed lights on Ohio Avenue and Station Ave. It turned out nice.

Mayor – thanked Jim Eberwine, our Emergency Management Coordinator and the school for bio blasting our building as well as the ambulance squad. She thanked Arlene Hanson who is making masks. Asked that everyone still support our local businesses at this time for pick up or delivery meals. She thanked the outgoing Chief DeRitis and congratulated J.R. and looks forward to working with him.

Keith thanked everyone for their patience tonight. We will all get through this and told everyone to stay safe. Keep your distance and wash your hands. Help your neighbors and the elderly if you can.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn – Councilman Phillips – second – Councilwoman Howell

All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,


Carrie A. Crone, City Clerk

Approved: 5-7-2020